MEMORIALS OF

OLD MEXBORO'.

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MEMORIALS

OF

OLD MEXBORO'

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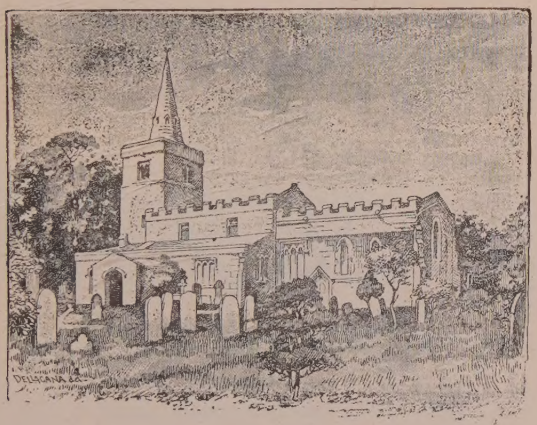

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BY

WILLIAM J. J. GLASSBY.

"Out of monuments, names,—traditions, private records and evidences, fragments of stories, passages of books, and the like, we doe save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time."—*Lord Byron.*

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PREFACE.

THE flight of time, the removal of one generation and the uprising of another, and the replacing of old by new customs, severs us from the past to which existing ancient landmarks cause us to glance back and take pleasure in turning over the chequered pages written on the face of history. Truly it is a good thing to gather up those links which shall bind together the past, present, and future, and to "save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time." With such an idea in view,

> "I look'd far back into other years, and lo! in bright array,
> I saw, as in a dream, the forms of ages passed away."

And though of the making of many books there is no end, the interest caused by the perusal of the notes relating to Old Mexbro' has led me to bring the same before the public, my only apology being—that Mexbro', so crowded with interesting memorials, is worthy of a place in the hive of literature, which want I have in an humble way endeavoured to supply.

To obtain trustworthy information, reference has been made to the works of Dodsworth, Hunter, Guest, Miller, and others; and for assistance rendered my thanks are due to my friends R. J. Shields, Mexbro' (for photograph of Church); Thomas Gregory, Sculptor, Heaton Moor; S. Shaw, Sheffield; W. Turner, L. Harrop, and others in Mexbro'; and to all those who by their promised patronage have enabled me to place this small work before the public.

W. J. J. G.

10 Elm Park Road,
Chelsea, S.W.,
Aug. 3, 1893.

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MEMORIALS

OF

OLD MEXBORO'.

INTRODUCTION.

MEXBOROUGH, a bustling, thriving town in the valley of the Don, and though decreasing in renown so far as its potteries are concerned, by its glass works, and in other ways, it is daily growing in importance, and in the estimation of all who look for the advancement of our commercial prosperity. But it is not to the Mexborough of 1893 that we would direct our attention, but to that of past ages—from its earliest reference in works of antiquity to within fifty years of the present time, viz., 1843, in which year Mexborough with the neighbouring hamlet of Denaby contained about 1300 inhabitants. The mention

of Denaby reminds us that the memorials concerning our friend across the water must be recorded here; for Denaby has from time immemorial been united in indissoluble bonds to the larger and more important district of Mexborough; and it is not our desire to treat the lovely spot with contempt by remaining indifferent to its claims on our notice, or by these printed pages endeavour to insinuate a dissolution of their matrimonial ties. Nay, our love for the rugged and picturesque would the rather be to embellish these pages by a mention of Denaby, even if it were not part and parcel of the larger township.

In the Autumn of 1892 it was our pleasure to wander for the first time along the shady paths of Denaby, enjoying the fresh breezes, exploring with delight every nook and cranny, plucking specimens from the floral kingdom, and regarding with wonder and delight the marvellous works of nature. And, spellbound, we paused in our walk to gaze around upon the sublime and beautiful, and had not the memorials of Old Mexborough stood out in bold relief in our minds we should have been tempted to forget the romance of the past, while we lost ourselves and our readers among nature's embellishments as they are displayed in fair Denaby. Well might we look upon it as the blushing bride of its hard-working neighbour, Mexborough.

But we must pause, or admiration for the beauty of the present will lead us to forget the romance and remarkable reality of the past; and upon that it is necessary to fix our minds, recalling from bygone ages the records of the departed who in their day and generation passed over the same ground we shall now cover, leaving behind them glad memories for us to seize in our endeavours to regale ourselves with all that shall enlighten and ennoble, and the better prepare us for a place among our compeers.

THE DON.

O many who will scan these pages the name of Mexborough,—or at least its whereabouts,—will be unknown; but who is there who has not heard of the gentle and lovely Don?

The River Don, or Dun, has derived its name from the Celtic Dan—a deep or low channel. Rising by the side of the lofty eminence of Snailsden, the Don takes its course towards a more picturesque country, passing betwixt Penistone's bold banks, near rocky Thurgoland, and under Wharncliffe, a rich and ancient wood,

> "Where Don's dark waters bathe the rugged feet
> Of billow'y mountains—silent, motionless,
> As if the Almighty's hand had still'd and fix'd.
> The waves of chaos, in their wildest spell;"

and which in the good old times was haunted by the so-called "Dragon of Wantley." Through the lovely oak forest, skirting the broad and undulating hills the now swelling river hastens on. Leaving Wantley and Wadsley, Sheffield is reached, where in bygone days a grand old castle kept watch and ward upon its banks; but on and ever on the river wends its way to Attercliffe and Wincobank,

. . "through which the river, like a snake uncoil'd,
Wanders, though tam'd, a match for conquering time."

and away, away, to Kimberworth and Eccles.

Rotherham is now approached and passed, and in our eagerness to find Mexborough we hasten by Thrybergh Park, once the seat of the Reresby's,—now in possession of the Fullertons,—and leaving in the rear Kilnhurst and Swinton, we at last arrive at Denaby and Mexborough. Here will we leave the famous river to make its way to Conisborough with its old castle ruin dark and dominating, bidding defiance alike to the assaults of wintry tempests and the corroding touch of time; and on through Sprotboro' midst rugged rock and verdure green to Doncaster; from whence after a journey amid varied scenery, it merges its tide in the current of the Ouse.

HISTORIC MEXBOROUGH.

HE Parish of Mexborough, including the district of Denaby on the south side of the Don, is in extent about 2366 acres, extending on the east to the confluence of the Dearne and Don, on the west to Swinton, and on the north and south from Adwick to Hooton Roberts. In earlier times the parish was of greater extent, embracing the towns of Swinton and Ravenfield, but now, as above shewn, extending only over the districts of Denaby and Mexborough. Baines, in his list of Yorkshire names derived from the Anglian dialects, gives the origin of the name of Mexborough as from Maeg-burg,—the union of a family or clan.

In accordance with our desire to consider the township as it appeared fifty years ago, we cannot do better than follow the guidance of the survey plan of that period, shewing the buildings to be few in number, simply and unevenly arranged; a true counterpart of villages to be met with in more primitive parts, and where the hand of the leveller has not improved away the simple rustic beauty so charming to the eye of lovers of art and nature.

The utilization of the resources of the town of Mexborough, however, has caused a wondrous change in the district, giving a visitor the idea as expressed in our opening sentence of a "bustling thriving town." With the removal of many old landmarks and places of interest, but little now remains from which to gather matter for thought, so we must content ourselves with looking at that portion of the township including, and in close proximity to, the old Parish Church, and upon such places where once stood features of a departed age, or are still to be seen relics of the bygone past.

To matter-of-fact business folk of the present day a visit to Mexborough would necessitate a journey by rail, but centuries before the introduction of the railroad Mexborough was of no small importance to our semi-civilized ancestors, and from different parts important roads converged to the little settlement, making easier the travels of those who were compelled to make use of the means of transit provided by nature. Of these roads but little trace now remains; but the Roman Rigg, perhaps of the first importance, has been shewn to have crossed the Don at Strafford Sands, so-called as here was a ford over which passed the road or street,—hence Street-ford or Strafford.

The Sands have now only an historical existance as they no longer remain and the ford has disappeared.

Upon the subject of these ancient roads much might be said of interest, but as those more learned in these matters are found to differ, we shall allow this passing mention to suffice. Before proceeding to the examination of the old buildings we might deal with the more elevated portions of the district. The name burh or burg meaning a fortress or place of strength, proves that Mechesburg (Mexboro') was a place of some consequence as a military position soon after the peopling of Yorkshire by the English race. In former times a line of British earthworks and fortresses ran from Combs Moss, in Derbyshire, to the great swamp of Hatfield Chase, the principal strongholds being at Combs Moss, Mam Tor, Hope, Sheffield, Wincobank, Greasboro', Mexborough, Conisbro', Kirk Sandal, and Hatfield Chase.

Though not of most importance among the above, the hills about Mexborough, similar to those of Conisbro', Tickhill, Wincobank, and Bradfield, are to us replete with interest, and to these will we turn our attention.

In nearly every case the construction is the same, but the earthwork at Mexborough is of greater magnitude than at Wincobank.

Hunter writes "The most probable supposition concerning all these works is that they belong to the Brigantian era, a

point, which no indication either in the form of the works themselves, or in the general history of the district, are sufficient to determine:" He further describes that at Mexborough as "an elliptical area surrounded by a high mound of earth and a conical tumulus rises near one of the foci. The tumulus is so placed that a considerable portion of it is within the mound. There are also appearances of an outwork beyond the trench."

This earthwork was no doubt constructed to form a protection to the passage over the Don at this place.

Here, close by, is Strafford Sands where the *Wapentake of Strafford and Tickhill was held. This Wapentake was the court of the Lord of the honour of Tickhill, the tenants and vassals assembling at this place twice a year swear allegiance. each one severally touching the spear held by their Lord, as a token of fealty.

The Castle hill rises at the eastern extremity of the town by the river, in many respects resembling the castle hill of Conisborough. The mention of castle hill here raises a question of interest. Dodsworth, the eminent collector of information relating to Yorkshire, writing concerning the Don describes the river as passing "Mexbrough, where hath been a castle." On inquiry among the inhabitants we cannot find even a tradition in support of Dodsworth's statement,

* Wapentake, from Anglo-Saxon Wœpen—weapon, tak—to touch.

the only one concerning the hill being, that the original founders of Conisbro' Castle intended building the fortress at Mexbro', but some perverse elves always came by night and transplanted the materials to their present site at Conisbro'. Nevertheless, it is most probable that at some time a castle defiantly reared its towering battlements on this spot although in putting forward such a theory we shall doubtless meet with the opposition of many.

On the advent of the conqueror in 1066, castles became everywhere abundant, and it is said that there were five castles between Sheffield and Doncaster, irrespective of the strongholds in those towns. Petty wars were waged on every hand, the Barons and Nobles warring against those in less exalted positions, or against each other. "The people oppressed, attached to the soil, disposed of like cattle, and lying at the mercy of the great. The country everywhere crowded with castles, the nurseries of rebellion, the retreats of plunderers, the dens of the lazy and profligate, and the seats of riot and debauchery."

At this time every town or pass of any importance presented a site for the feudal stronghold of some lawless Baron; and to such an extent were these homes of sedition scattered over the country, that in the reign of Stephen it is supposed there were no fewer than 1100 castles, mighty and defiant in their massive strength.

With reference to such a building at Mexborough not much can be deduced from early writings, but we will here refer to a work by John Wainwright who in 1829 wrote concerning Conisbro',—

> "Several other similar edifices formerly reared their frowning crests on the banks of the Don, but that at Conisbro' only escaped destruction. The sites of all of them are traditionally pointed out, although not one stone of the structures can now be identified."

Shall not the foregoing justify us in the assumption that a castle once existed in Mexborough? We may follow up the above theories and extracts with a thought of Sheffield castle and that of Doncaster, of the existence of which at some time there can be no denial. But where are the stones of which the buildings were composed? Not one remains as a memorial, or to mark the site of the romantic grandeur of the past. And why not so with Mexborough?

From the little which we may glean let us remain satisfied and assured that here we have at Castle Hill, the site of a once noble edifice, the scene of glory and power, the home of romance and chivalry.

Now will we turn our attention to the meadows lying on the north side of the Don opposite Strafford Sands, namely the Mexbro' Ings.

Bound up in the general aspect, to strangers this locality

might pass unnoticed, yet a large amount of interest centres thereon.

We may without demur place reliance upon the records of Geffery and here behold the field known in times past as Maisbeli.

This writer, referring to Cunungeburg (Conisbro'), states that in the fifth century there was a fortress* there which proved the scene of many memorable transactions. The narrative of most interest to us, is, that Aurelius Ambrosius had been made king by the Britons, then opposed by the Saxon power. In A.D. 487 Hengist, the Saxon leader, knowing that Ambrosius intended to pass through the field of Maisbeli, prepared to meet him in this place. Ambrosius, nothing daunted, marched his army to the spot, a great battle ensued, resulting in the defeat of the Saxons. Hengist beat a hasty retreat to Cær-conan pursued by Ambrosius, who completed his victory by slaying many of the enemy, making slaves of others, and putting Hengist to death

Concerning Mexborough, we can find but one other historic reference connected with the troublous times which our country has passed through. During the great Civil War of the 17th century, and after the battle of Marston Moor, Pontefract was the only royal garrison in the North. Colonel Ravensborough, who, with his army was at Doncaster,

* Not the present castle which is undoubtedly of 11th century construction.

received orders to march to Pontefract; but the Royalists of that place, desiring to frustrate him, formed a plan for getting possession of the Colonel, and at the same time to exchange him for Sir Marmaduke Langdale, then a prisoner in the hands of the Parliamentarians at Nottingham. For this purpose Captain Paulden, with twenty-two select men, left Pontefract at midnight, Oct. 30, 1648. Arriving at Mexborough, a halt was made, one man being despatched to Doncaster to ascertain whether their designs had become known.

The Captain, with the main body, having secreted themselves during the day in the neighbourhood of Mexbro', were joined there later by their companion, who informed them that all was quiet at Doncaster, and should matters remain favourable, on the morrow a friend would meet them on the road carrying a bible; this being a signal for them to proceed. All came to pass as arranged. Capt. Paulden divided his men into four companies,—six to secure the main guard; six the guard upon the bridge; four to capture the Colonel; while he with the remaining six would beat the street to keep the enemy from assembling. The guards were secured; and the four having obtained an entry to the Colonel's apartments by stating that they had letters from Cromwell announcing a great victory,—were admitted to the bedchamber of the Colonel. Upon rising from the

bed they informed him that he was their prisoner, and disarming his Lieutenant, both were conducted downstairs where a horse was in readiness to convey the prisoner to Pontefract. While in the act of mounting, seeing his sentinels standing by, he cried "To Arms! To Arms!" A fight ensued, the Lieutenant being stabbed through the body, and the Colonel, after receiving many wounds, falling dead. The assaulting party speedily escaped from the town, returning by way of Mexbro' to Pontefract Castle, which surrendered soon after this well-planned but unsuccessful coup.

We will now refer to the Domesday Book completed A.D. 1081. Concerning Mexborough, the following is a correct translation:—

> "In Mechesburg (Mexbro'), Ulfac, Uchil, Ulchel, had five carucates[1] of land to be taxed, where there may be four ploughs. Roger has now there one plough and eight villanes,[2] and four bordars[3] with three ploughs, and one mill of eight shillings."

Upon so important a subject as the foregoing we cannot do better than fully quote Hunter, as from his works may be gathered a fund of information. Concerning the three landowners mentioned, and other ancient history of the Manor of Mexborough, he writes—

1. Carucate—as much land as a team could plough in a year.
2. Villane—a farm slave, born upon and transferable with the land but who could himself hold land.
3. Bordar or borderer—a slave of the lowest degree, and working for his keep.

"Ulfac was doubtless the person of that name who held half of Adwick. He had other lands as had also his co-lords of Mexborough, Ulchil and Ulchel. The lands here as at Adwick were granted out by Roger de Busli immediately after his acquisition of them, to Swein fitz Ailric, or Ailric his father.

The appearance of these people in possession is generally indicated by the foundation or gift of a church. Indeed the only evidence here or at Adwick of their possession arises out of their gifts to monastic bodies. Swein gave half the church to Nostell. The other half was given by Adam de Montbegon, who married one of his granddaughters to the house of Bratton, founded by Adam the son of Swein. But Adam de Montbegon gave the monks at the same time all that he possessed of Mexborough, so that they obtained the lay-superiority here as well as one half of the ecclesiastical.

The Manor of Mexborough thus in mortmain continued so till the dissolution of the house Bretton, in the time of Henry VIII.

In the 9. Edward II., (1316) the prior of Bretton is returned Lord. In 1327, Archbishop Melton gave license to the prior, that he might let his Manor of Mexburgh for the benefit of his house. In 43. Edward

III. (1370) the king granted him free warren in all these lands.

But there seems to have been other tenancies of the Lord of Tickhill in this place. In Kirkby's Inquest John le Vavasour is said to hold six bovates* in Mekesburgh of the King; as of his honour of Tickhill. And in the rolls of Tickhill fees, so often referred to, 'the tenants of Roger Bacon did fealty, and acknowledged that they held in Mekesborough four oxgangs of land,† and paid every year for keeping the castle of Tickhill, in each year 2s. 4d., and in the third year nothing, and they came to the two great courts,'

A William Bacon had lands here in 17. Henry VI. (1439).

At the dissolution the Manor of Mexbro' constituted a valuable part of the endowment of the house of Monk Bretton, the gross value (including something at Carhouse) being £22 18s. It was managed by a bailiff, who in the reign of Henry VIII. was Edmund Dewis, his salary 20s. It did not remain long in the crown. In 36. Henry VIII. (1545) the Manor of Mexburgh was included in a grant made to Morgan Wolfe, Thomas Calton and others. In 1577 it was held by — Blount, Esq., in right of his wife.

† A bovate or oxgang of land—15 acres.

It appears to have reverted to the crown, for in the survey of the crown lands, 1649, it is said to have been granted with the Manor of Bolton upon Dearne, on August 31. 41 Elizabeth (1599) to Francis Trappes Birnand. He was of Harrogate and was afterwards knighted.

From Bernard's survey, whence we learn the temporary occupancy of this Manor by Blount, we gather that there was another manor in Mexbrough, which has lately belonged to Roger Vavasour, Esq., and then to Ann Reresby, widow."

This must have been connected with Denaby as a further reference will show.

"Sir Francis Trappes Birnand had a son and heir, Robert, father of Francis Trappes Birnand, living in 1676; but how long the Manor of Mexbrough remained in this family I am unable to say, or by what means it passed to Mrs. Clay who was lady of Mexbrough at the beginning of the last century. From this lady it descended to Mrs. Reeves,"

and finally to Andrew Montagu, Esq., the present owner.

Before passing from the more ancient history of the parish we might refer to the extracts from the registers of the Archbishops of York, concerning certain contentions which

arose between the owners of land, and, although not necessary for us to notice, will be of interest owing to their connection with Mexbro', as well as for their quaint wording.

6. John, (1205).

"Between Eustace de Vesci, plaintiff, and Henry, son of the Seneschall, defendant, concerning one bovate of land with appurtenancies in Mekesburg, and of one toft with appurtenancies in Roddenham,—the right of Eustace. And Eustace granted to the said Henry and his heirs the said bovate and toft, with appurtenancies to hold of Eustace and his heirs for ever by the free service of 10s. per ann. for all service saving external service due to the crown.[1]

7. John, (1206).

Between Eustace de Vesci, plaintiff, and Robert, son of Richard, defendant, concerning two bovates of land with appurtenancies in Merkesburgh, and of XL acres of land with appurtenancies in Rodenham—the right of Eustace. And the said Eustace grants to the said Robert the said ij bovates with appurtenancies in Merkesburgh, to hold to the same Robert and heirs, by the free service of 5s. per annum.*

1. Dodsworth's MSS., Vol. 73, p. 82.
* Dodsworth's MSS., Vol. 73, p. 83.

Hilary Term, I. Ed. II. (1307).

Ralph de Waddisley was summoned to answer the Abbot of Rufford in a plea of agreement for 1 messuage, 1 toft, 1 acre and 46 ft. of land in Roderham and Mekesburgh, and for the homage and service of John de Gotham.† "

† Dodsworth's MSS., Vol. 153, p. 1.

SOME OLD MEMORIALS.

LEAVING the most interesting topic, viz., the Church, to be dealt with in a later chapter, we will seek out such old buildings as may repay us for our trouble. On the left of Doncaster Road, coming from the town of that name, and just before we reach Pinfold Lane some old farm buildings are to be seen. The history of them, or their earliest tenants, seems to be unknown; but upon two of the buildings we notice letters and symbol carved on the stone lintel over each of the doorways. The first on the left hand side of the entrance is as follows:—

ANOO. DOM

I · F · D

and immediately in front of this a building facing the south, with lettering very similar, and to all appearances cut by the same person who was author of the preceding:—

F
I · · D
1 6 6 9

Although no knowledge can be obtained with regard to these buildings, we look with reverence upon the handiwork of past generations, which for two centuries has defied the ravages of time and decay, and remain proofs of the thorough workmanship of those who have long since passed away.

Still continuing along the main road, to the right appears the National School, a neat stone building. Upon this site once stood the structure which formerly served in a like capacity, but was far inferior to the present edifice. The first was a long, low stone building approached by the ascent of two steps up to the little porch. The floor and roof consisted of stone flags; the interior being partitioned for the purpose of forming a separate room each for boys and girls. For the Schoolmaster, in one corner stood an old desk and armchair, the remainder of the rooms containing the seats and desks for the scholars. The demolition of the schoolhouse in 1845 has removed from our midst an interesting fabric, but as Time cycles the world expands, and that which did duty well erstwhile, becomes all too strait for the enlarged requirements of succeeding generations.

Passing along the same side of the road there shortly appears the remains of the old Rock pottery,—although at the time of writing the wreckers are in possession,—and

speedily upon a portion of the site will be raised a temple to the spread of Wesleyanism; for here will be built the new Wesleyan Chapel.

After the death of Mr. Reed, the owner, in 1870 the pottery was taken by Mr. Sydney Wolf until 1883. Passing to Mr. Wilkinson, it was worked by him till 1885 when the place was dismantled, the plant being sold by auction. Little now remains save the old cupolas, recalling to the memories of many the prosperity of the pottery in its palmiest days. So, hastening on, we will turn towards the Market Hall, and pursuing an easterly direction make a line for the old Church.

On the left of Market Street are two little cottages, types of many in country villages, but to these is attached an interest not exceeded by any other. Here dwelt Mrs. Kilham, the Mexbro' Centenarian, who died in September, 1891, having lived for 103 years, 100 years after the death of her mother and residing in this house for 74 years.

A few steps along the same side of the street are six quaint cottages with courtyard running along the front. In these are to be found the old people, who, having passed through their active years, seek retirement from the battle of life and spend their last days in enjoyment of a well earned rest.

Upon the wall over the central doorway is the delapidated form of a stone tablet which originally bore the arms of William Horne, and a Latin inscription. The whole is so corroded by the tooth of time that scarcely any of the carving is discernable. It is interesting, however, to know the inscription which appeared on the tablet—"Deo et pauperibus per Gulielmum Horne, generosum, anno aetatis suae 54 anno D'ni. 1669"; shewing that, owing to the generosity of William Horne these buildings were founded in 1669, the same year in which the farm buildings were erected which we noticed off Doncaster Road. In accordance with the will of one, Calverley, dated April 25, 1721, the Almshouses were endowed with £5 yearly to be derived from the charge upon the "George and Dragon" farm, in Mexboro, now owned by Mr. Montagu.

Leaving these houses which have proved a haven of rest to so many, we proceed further to where on the right is the house of Dr. Twigg, once the home of Mr. John Reed whom we mentioned in connection with the pottery. In the grounds adjoining the house is a Gothic arch facing the roadway and richly carved with grotesque figures and heads, the whole having been designed and carried out by the late Robert Glassby in 1859.

Continuing our journey to the junction of Church Street

and Pinfold Lane, standing away from the road on a rising ground is the house where the last named was born on December 18, 1835, and who after much perseverance, overcame all obstacles and forced his way into the world of Art. His death in London on August 3, 1892, was regretted by many in all classes of society; at his funeral Her Majesty being represented, and sending a magnificent wreath inscribed as "A mark of respect from Queen Victoria."

A few paces onward through Church Street brings us to a group of farm buildings on the left. We will let our minds dwell upon one of these which to many is a spot fraught with hallowed associations, as here occurred the advent of Methodism in Mexboro.

Our authority for this is an article from the "Christian Miscellany" as follows:—

> "Mexborough—now a busy, thriving place, lying on the Don—was about three-quarters of a century ago of limited dimensions and very sparsely inhabited. It had a small Church, and, as our story will show, some form of local government. The parish clerk, Robert Glassby, who was also its schoolmaster, held the office of constable, and evidently considered it his duty to keep the peace and prevent any approach towards disturbance. At this time Methodism had no existence

in the village although it is only six miles from Rotherham. A change was, however, at hand. In the year 1804, the Rev. Robert Newton, D.D., was appointed to the Rotherham circuit. His fame as a preacher of distinguished eloquence and power had already been spread abroad, and he was the first Wesleyan preacher who visited the place. In what is now called Old Mexbrough, near the church, on the opposite side of the road, stands an old farmhouse, enclosed within walls, then occupied by a Mr. Sellers. Mrs. Mary Styring, of Wickersley, near Rotherham, 'a mother in Israel,' who felt an interest in the place, got his consent to come and preach to the people. Among the hearers, or perhaps we should say the onlookers, was the important official who blended in himself the threefold office of constable, schoolmaster, and parish clerk. Irritated that anyone should presume to interfere with the religious care of the parish, and zealous to preserve the peace, he told the preacher that if he should presume to come again he would apprehend him. Dr. Newton was not likely to be deterred from his work by these threats; he announced another service in a month's time, and again made his appearance at the place and began his service in the same house. The parish clerk, also true to his word, had engaged several men to render their help in taking the

preacher, and had provided handcuffs for the purpose. So well was the intention known that a man from Wath, James Thorpe, an old Methodist, along with several others, came with the expectation of seeing the apprehension. As the service proceeded the men employed said to the official, 'Shall we take him?' 'No,' replied the constable, 'he has not said anything amiss against the King or the country.' The service still progressing, again they whispered, 'Sha'n't we take him now?' 'No,' again was the reply, 'he has said nothing wrong,' and so the service was peaceably concluded and the congregation dismissed."

The untoward surroundings, and grave difficulties under which these pioneers of Wesley's teachings laboured, explain the cause of their success. The meetings held in the farmhouse kitchen progressed under the feeble light of the old fashioned tallow candle, the preacher aiding himself by holding a "dip" in his hand while reading, the snuffers lying hard by for the frequent trimming of the lessening flame. Truly an uphill fight, yet bearing results which compel the fraternity of to-day to applaud the self-denial and stubborn nerve of their forefathers.

The cause of Methodism continued to grow, meetings being regularly held in the farmhouse until in 1833 such progress had been made that a fine chapel was built; soon, however,

to be superseded by a new building which is being erected on the site of the Rock Pottery as before-mentioned.

We now turn to the next building,—the home of Mr. Varah Lockwood. The most interesting portion is certainly the interior, although the exterior still bears the traces of its past history. Here upon our right we notice the large iron ring, still firmly fixed in the wall, where once was tethered the traveller's horse; for be it known this was the village hostelry graced by the presence of Dame Varah, known far and wide as the vendor of prime home-brewed ale. Close by on our left is the time-worn horse-block, by which many a farmer has remounted his horse after having satisfied the cravings of the inner man.

Within the house we centre our attention upon the old kitchen, once used by the frequenters of the inn, and but little altered since it served as the public-room; and as we look at the large open range we feel envious of the times when, as an open house, customers could here seek a retreat from the bitter blasts of the wintry tempest, and find solace and comfort in the imbibing of hot spiced ale and other luxuries.

From the Church register we gather that in 1765 Thomas Varoh married Martha Darling, henceforth to be known as Dame Varoh. Now the nearest doctor lived at Wath, so this good lady was singled out to perform the delicate operation

of vaccinating the children, her daughter afterwards becoming her successor as vaccination officer for the district. A Dorothy Varah became the wife of the Rev. Leonard Jasper Hobson, Incumbent of Melton and Mexboro', on Oct. 10, 1803.

The regime of the Lockwoods commenced in 1817, on the union of the two families by the marriage of Joseph Lockwood, of Bolton Mill, to Martha Varah. The Inn was then closed, but while Joseph Lockwood followed the avocation of a farmer and miller, his better-half carried on the business of apothecary, draper, and grocer.

Many are the items of interest in connection with this house and its successive occupants, but our time will not allow of a prolonged stay. Two venerable cottages adjoining must not be left unnoticed, and though soiled with the grimy hand of time during latter years, the thatched roof and lattice windows with diamond-shaped panes almost compel us to forget the progress which has been made around. Here to, close by, is the village smithy, or as it is more commonly known Cooper's blacksmith shop; and though one cannot say concerning it, that

> "Under a spreading chestnut tree,
> The village smithy stands,"

the old shop greatly adds to the charm and picturesqueness of this portion of the district which especially forms our theme.

We will now cross the road to a group of farm buildings. Here we see upon the wall over the entrance the name of a former occupier, shewing that they belonged to "William Dickinson, farmer and maltster." Advancing to the Church gates we come to the spot where formerly stood the stocks and where transgressors of the law, often to their utter chagrin, were forced to spend a few miserable hours in durance vile,—hours frequently made viler by wags who indulged in the pastime of plying the victim with sundry defunct and altogether undesirable specimens of the feline tribe, unsavoury eggs, or such sweet missiles as came to the ready hands of the tormentors. With the advance of civilization and the improved (?) method of punishment, the stocks fell into disuse and were removed, no doubt to the disappointment of many of the rising generation who would gladly have availed themselves of an opportunity to enjoy a little sport at the expense of some ill-favoured mortal.

Quitting the site ingloriously associated with the faults and failings of men of the past, we will enter the gates of the churchyard, and so proceed to the task of the old Church.

THE CHURCH.

O single out the few places of interest in Mexborough, strangers might find some little difficulty, but not so with the Church, for from all points may be seen the little steeple of the sacred edifice shewing above the tops of the trees and buildings encompassing three sides; while from Denaby, or the Don, the venerable temple of praise stands out in simplicity and grace, causing the thoughts of the beholder to revert to the One in Whose worship His people here meet to engage.

The style of building leads us to fix the commencement of its construction as towards the close of the 11th, or beginning of the 12th, century. The Church was no doubt founded by Ailric who was the founder of the Church of Adwick, and whom we have already had cause to mention. In the earlier period of its existence it was well endowed, receiving the tithe of Swinton and Ravensfield, in addition to that of Mexborough and Denaby.

One moiety of the Church was given by Montbegon, who married the grand-daughter of Sweine fitz Ailric; the other

half by Swein himself to the Canons of Nostell, such gift being confirmed by Thurston, Archbishop of York, who presided over the See from 1114 to 1140.

The names of some of the first Rectors in charge of the parish have been preserved, viz.:—

Robert de Bassingburn; Ralph de Whitmore, 1235; Roger, clericus de Brecknock dioc. 13 Kal. Dec. 1242; and Alan de Sedecin Vallibus, or Thixendale, who was presented by the Prior and Convent of Bretton. In the time of Archbishop Walter Gray, 1216—1256, a great change took place in the constitution of the Church. In the Coucher Book of Nostell is an ordination by this Archbishop, dated at York, 15. Kal. Jun. in the 23rd year of his episcopal authority (1248) setting forth that:—

> "Whereas the Prior and Convent of Nostell have a grant from the Apostolic See to appropriate the Churches of Bolton, &c., the foresaid moiety of the Church of Mexborough, which the said Canons some time held of our grace, we have adjoined for ever to the Archdeaconry of York."

Thirteen years later, the other moiety was annexed to the Archdeaconry. This was in the time of Archbishop Godfrey de Ludham, to whom submitted themselves, Mr. R. de Skipton, Archdeacon of York; the Prior and Convent of Bretton; Mr. Alan de XVI. Vallibus, then the Rector; and

Mr. Innocentius, then Vicar of Royston; and he using diligent deliberation and desirous to provide for the profits as well of the Church of York as of the monastery, ordained,

> "that the Church of Mexborough should henceforth be entire, and for ever annexed to the Archdeaconry of York; that Alan should take all tithe of corn, and the profits of Ravenfield and Swinton to the Church of Mexborough by parochial right belonging, and the moiety of the tithe of corn of Dennaby, in the name of a single benefice without cure of souls; yet so that if the said Alan resigned or died, or obtained a fatter benefice, the said tithe should wholly revert to the church, and be peaceably possessed by the Archdeacon and his successors." And on "1. Aug. 1263, that the house of Bretton might not be damnified, in which regular observances are wont to flourish to the praise of God, with the consent of Mr. Innocentius it is ordained, that the convent should have, above the tithe of corn which they have already enjoyed in the parish of Royston, the tithe of the corn of Cudworth which belonged to the Vicar; Innocentius to continue in the enjoyment of it as long as he remained Vicar."

All this was finally established on the Kal. of August, 1263.

A glance at the Church by the barely initiated, will at once suffice to shew that but a small portion of the original building remains, in fact, so much restoration has been necessary, that in this case we must waive our idea to speak only of matters relating to the past, and consider the sacred pile as it appears before us at the present time.

A writer who was privileged to examine the structure during the restoration of 1890—91, is of opinion that the building had passed through three stages, basing his ideas on the fact that the two round pillars and plain square capitals on the north side of the nave would date from 1080 to 1100; secondly, that the doorway uncovered in the wall under the arch nearest west proved the taking down of the north aisle, and building up to the arches, between 1260 and 1280; and, thirdly, that the two windows which existed in the north wall told of another alteration between 1400 and 1450.

Fifty years ago the Church consisted of a tower and spire, a nave, square-ended chancel, and north and south aisle. A gallery known as the loft ran along the south side; another for the choir on the west; the organ being above, close to the belfry. The body of the church was filled with old fashioned high-backed pews, formed into squares, the worshippers sitting facing each other; close to the chancel being the stove, attendance to which, during service, must

have caused considerable annoyance to the parsons of those days. A plain oak pulpit,—for service rather than for ornament,—nestled on the north side; while close at hand was the little table and chair for the parish clerk, who ever and anon emitted a loud "Amen" or led the congregation in such responses as the service required.

Entrance into the building was by a porch on the south side; on the left, between the door and belfry, being an old octagonal stone font, undoubtedly a relic of the original church. Narrow Gothic windows appeared in the walls which were adorned with mural tablets—rich in design and execution—and commemorating the virtues of those to whom they were erected, and whose ashes now rest beneath the sacred edifice. The remains of old stained glass windows have been carefully preserved, and inserted in the windows of the Rectory porch. These are two excellent specimens, and richly coloured, one being embellished with the emblems of the passion and shield of faith; the other bearing a lion rampant.

Upon the floor were to be seen old gravestones,—one carved with a cross of Calvary with two-fold arms; on another a rich cross flory with sword by the side of it. In the chancel were two stone flags, one to the memory of William . . . . and Elizabeth, his wife; the other, . . . wne, Esquire, and Dorothy Danby, his wife.

Other inscriptions were to the memory of Dorothy, daughter of John Rhodes, Esq., of Horbury, 1687, aged 33; Thomas, son of Anthony Worrall of Denaby, 1707; Thomas Belton, Curate, who died 22. Jan. 1690, aged 73, to this being added the humble confession "Hic jacet peccator penitens." (Here lies a penitent sinner).

But while the bringing to light of several portions of the old building has added interest to the place, it is with regret that we notice the removal of other interesting objects. Thus, for the welfare of the worshippers, some of these old tablets have been hidden from our eyes; while the old font, so fraught with interest to the descendants of those who in its presence were admitted into the established church,—as well as from an archæological point of view,—has been buried beneath the site of the present one, which in its exactness is an ugly disfigurement to the old historic place, when compared with its rudely carved predecessor. Truly, it is a wonderful example of the spirit of the times, when room cannot be found for a venerable relic of this kind to be placed where it may be seen by all comers.

To the Church of the past, in the village days of Mexbro', how well might we apply the lines of Mullins:—

"The church itself, a venerable pile,
Though very old, was yet exceeding clean:
Some narrow windows in the Gothic style,
Stuck here and there along the walls were seen.

An old stone tower, affected not by time,
Contained the bell, which had for ages been
Still pealing forth the same dull iron chime,
Whereby it noted first the march of years sublime.

A low-built gallery ran from wall to wall,
While down below large roomy pews were ranged,
Where some still worshipped in their father's place
From age to age, by families unchanged.

Upon the walls old tablets dimly told
The age, the name, and virtues of the dead:
Each had some tale peculiar to unfold;
But all alike to one conclusion led,—
That Man, at last, must Death's dark valley tread:
The brave, the beautiful, the grave, the gay,
The warm young heart, the gray and hoary head,
In dull cold silence mixed together lay,
Life's poor distinctions lost, reduced to common clay.

And while the bell knolled forth the Sabbath day,
From various parts the congregation came:
Here walked a pair most venerably grey;
There by herself a stooped and withered dame;
And next a cripple, from her childhood lame.
Then household groups more slowly o'er the green;
Or coy young girls, with eyes cast down for shame.

At the present time the Church consists of a tower and spire, nave, chancel and apse; and although we complain of the reckless way in which the restoration was carried out, for the benefit of the worshippers the arrangement is a great improvement. Of necessity a portion of the old fabric has been removed; and in adddion to what remained we now have a new porch;—tower arch, and chancel arch;—opening

out of the arches in the north wall;—new south aisle and building of a north aisle;—new arcading and walling from pillar brasses to parapet; and to the chancel the addition of an apse, new organ chamber, and lancet window in the north wall; and new oak roof.

The whole body of the building has been re-seated; and gifts of a stone pulpit, oak chancel screen, stained glass windows and other bestowals, have made the Church all that could be desired by the worshippers of the nineteenth century.

The exterior of the structure is strikingly commendable, its small tower, Gothic porch, and battlemented walls forming as charming a picture as may be seen in any country parish.

In ancient times in the building of churches, a superstition was rife that the devil would have something to do with every house erected for the worship of God; and with this idea in their minds, the builders set apart for him that portion which performed the most menial service, namely, the carrying off of the rainwater. Here, therefore, we may see at different places the gargoyles consisting of grotesque heads, imaginary portraits of his Satanic Majesty.

Above the entrance to the porch is a niche containing a gothic figure dedicated to the patron Saint,—John the Baptist. The figure, in Roche Abbey stone, was carved and presented to the Church by Mr. R. E. Glassby, of London, in February, 1893.

Entering the porch our attention is attracted by some ancient stones uncovered during the recent restoration, and which are let into the new side wall, having carved upon them strangely deviced crosses.

Proceeding into the Church, on our left is a small stained glass window depicting the figure of an Archbishop, presumably intended for that of that remarkable man Walter Gray, sometime Lord Chancellor of England, and Archbishop of York from 1215 to 1255, as we gather from the inscription underneath,—"Walter Gray, Archiep. Ebor. A.D. 1215—1255." We are glad that one who did so much for the Church of Mexbro' should thus have his name commemorated by the generosity of the Rev. T. Horstall, a former Curate, who presented the window to the Church,

In the belfry, to which access is had by means of two steep ladders, are the three bells whose sweet sounds fill the air with an harmonious melody Sabbath by Sabbath. Upon the largest of these is the inscription—

"GLORIA IN ALTISSIMUS DEO. 1748

THO. SELLER. JUNIOR—JOS. CUDWORTH.
THO. SELLER. SENIOR—RICH. THOMPSON. } CHURCHWARDENS."

The second, having cracked, was recast in 1879 by J. Taylor & Co., Loughborough, and bears the inscription—

SANCTUS - SANCTUS - SANCTUS - DOMINUS. - DEUS

Rev. H. Ellershaw, M.A.

J. Thompson,
J. Bullock, } Wardens.

and the founder's name.

The third bell, which is the smallest and most ancient, and which undoubtedly rang out the Curfew of long ago, has upon it a small raised shield bearing the following strange device, most probably the founder's mark:—

In the north aisle have been placed the columns unearthed; and other stones found at the same time have been wisely inserted in the south wall right of the entrance. These stones were what originally formed the bénitiers,—one being to hold the holy water, the other the means of conveying it away when the fresh water was necessary.

Within the chancel, curiosity compels us to raise the carpet, when we expose to view a large tablet bearing the following inscription:—

Memoriae Sacrum
Gulielmi Horne, Armiegeri.
Hic jacet
Gulielmus Horne, de Mexburgh.
Lector!
si quaeris qualis erat quem haec terra tegit
accipe in parvo.
Principi suo fuit fidelis subditus:
ecclesiae Anglicanae orthodox filius;
amicis et vicinis apprimè charus:
invisus nulli nisi iis qui illum non probe norant.
Vixit annos 63, et obiit 26 Martii, 1679,
annorum satur et coelo paratus
et nunc in Domino placide quiescit
beatam praestolans resurrectionem;
sub hoc tumulo
quem moerentes ejus posteri illi posuere.
Viator, ne invideas dormienti nam tu sequeris.

The English rendering of this is:—

Sacred to the memory of William Horne, Esquire.
Here lies William Horne of Mexborough.
Reader! if thou inquirest what manner of man he was, take it in short.—He was a faithful subject to his Prince;—an orthodox son of the Church of England;—very dear to his friends and neighbours;—hated by

none unless by those who did not well know him. He lived 63 years, and died March 26, 1679,—full of days and prepared for Heaven; and now rests under this tomb (peaceably in the Lord) which his lamenting posterity have raised him, expecting a happy resurrection. Traveller, envy not the sleeper, for thou shalt follow.

Affixed to the lower portion of this stone flag is a small brass tablet inscribed—

Adjacent lieth interred
The body of Alexander Horne
Merchant, who was sohn of
Wm. Horne of Mexburgh, Esq:
And Departed this life ye 20 day of
November. Anno qe 1687.

At the further end of the Church may be seen a portion of other stones, being those mentioned on a preceding page; but, owing to the flooring laid down for the comfort of the choir, now almost entirely hidden from view.

Here, too, upon the walls, are splendid examples of monuments of the 17th century,—oval black marble tablets surrounded by richly carved armorial bearings, shields, and other decorations emblematical of a future state. All are to the memory of members of the Savile family, the present representative of which is the Earl of Mexborough.

The oldest of these monuments, and the one to which we will first direct attention, is that on the north wall at the further end of the Chancel, erected to the memory of the first member of the family who settled in the district:—

Memoriae Sacrum
Samuelis Savile armigeri

Hic sacros cineres deposuit S. Savile senior, quem mominare s'et est Laudasse, et laudare in terminis non sufficit nec marmor, nec lingua: Serenissimis Caroli primi Regis et martiris corpori ab Armis, et ejus languescentis causae propugnator strenuus. Collegii Regalis quondam et omnium bonorum semper socius. Ecclesiae et orthodoxi cleri venerator candidus, virtutnm Rei literariae ingens Thesaurus, Rebellionis et virtiorum Hostis acerrimus. Post magnos angores et morborum violentia inflictos majori tamen patientia superatos desiit tandem vivere et servire et Animam Deo, corpus humo, famam posteris maerorem bonis omnibus relinquens, Anno Dni 1660 Aetatis suae 72 ad patriam coelestem transmigravit Triumphalis senex ornamentum sui et exemplur sequentis saeculi.

Cura et impensis Aliciae Savile et Samuelis Savile uxoris et filii. S. Savile defunc hoc monumentum erectum fuit 1661.

The English rendering of this epitaph shews it to be a very beautiful one—

> "Sacred to the memory of Samuel Savile,. Esquire. Here, Samuel Savile, Senr., has laid his sacred ashes, whom to mention is to have praised sufficiently; and to praise within bounds neither this marble nor language is sufficient. He was of the body-guard of his most sacred Majesty, Charles I. the martyr, and a strenuous defender of his languid cause. Formerly a fellow of King's College, and always the fellow of all good men. A candid reverencer of the orthodox clergy,—an immense treasure of virtue and learning.
>
> After great pain inflicted by the violence of disease, yet overcome by greater patience, at length, he ceased to live and serve; and leaving his soul to God, his body to the earth, and grief to all men, he died A.D. 1660, in the 72nd year of his age. The triumphant old man, the ornament of his own and an example to the following age, transmigrated to a heavenly country.
>
> With great care and expense this monument was erected by Alice and Samuel Savile his wife and son to S. Savile deceased, 1661."

Upon the same side of the Church is another to the memory of the son and successor to the estate and who

was a Captain of Sir George Savile's foot regiment for Agbrig and Morley in 1666.

Memoriae Sacrum
S. Saville.
Juxta hanc Parietem Custodiendum
deponitur quod reliquum Samuelis
Savile de Mexburgh A.R. Samuelis
Savile Regi Carolo I. Corpori ab Armis.
filius unicus. Qui Deo Devotus Ecclesiae
Orthodoxus Regi Fidelis. Familiae
charus et bonis omnibus desiderabilis
ab hac in Meliorem transmigravit
Vitam 13 Die Decembris Anno
Dom. 1685 Aetatis suae 54.

Sacred to the memory of S. Savile. Near this wall, this is placed to guard the remains of Samuel Savile of Mexborough, Esqr., only son of Samuel Savile of the body-guard of King Charles I. Who, devoted to God, orthodox to the Church, faithful to the King, beloved by his family, and lamented by all good men, departed out of this life to a better, December 13th, 1685, in the 54th year of his age.

Facing this upon the south wall of the Chancel is one bearing the following beautiful verses:—

Here lies all that was mortall
of Margaret Savile, Second Wife of
Wm. Savile of Mexbrough. Esqr.
who exchanged this World for a better,
the 19 of March. An. Dom. 1695.

When Heavn did thy Fair Soul receiv,
Which did as Fair a Body leav,
A generall Sadness filld each place,
We read thy Death in every Face.
Thy Loss the Bankrupt age deprives,
(O Best of Women, and of Wives)
Of Virtues Image drawn so fair
We must to see the like despair.
Yet Goe! For Shoudst thou longer Stay,
And Heavn our Loss, thy Crown delay,
No mortall Honours woud Suffise,
We should not Love but Idolize.

Just beyond this upon the same wall is another of a less elaborate design:—

M. S.
Samuelis Savile de
Mexbrough, Gen. qui
Obit Tricessimo Die Januaril
1723 Aetatis Suae 59
Hic Jacet peccator
paenitens.

"Sacred to the Memory of Samuel Savile, Esquire, of Mexborough, who died January 30th, 1723, aged 59. Here lies a penitent sinner."

As a means of beautifying the church, and at the same time to commemorate the lives of the departed, several stained glass windows and marble tablets have been placed therein. Although of modern date, it will not be out of place to make mention of these.

Upon the north wall is one as follows:—

This tablet is erected to the memory of
Samuel Barker, late of Mexborough House,
born October 16th 1802, died July 15th, 1856.

In all the relations of life his virtues were conspicuous. He was a devoted husband, a watchful and indulgent parent, and, as a friend, generous and sympathising; his urbanity as a master and his benevolence and consistency as a Christian will long be remembered by those who knew him; he humbly and peaceably fell asleep, trusting solely to the atoning sacrifice of Christ Jesus for Salvation.

Also of Jane Barker, his beloved wife; born 14th July, 1800; died 3rd September, 1869.

"Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I. Cor. i. 7.)

Also of Francis David, son of the above; born 27th January, 1837; died 4th December, 1838.

Another close by has for inscription:—

"Sacred to the memory of Ann Hobson, widow of Leonard Hobson, of Leeds, and mother of Leonard Jasper Hobson. incumbent of Melton and Mexborough, who died May 13, 1830, aged 75 years."

"The truths Divine here preached in faith and prayer,
Were taught me by a mother's care."

Within the chancel, upon the north wall, are two memorials. The first is a three-light stained glass window depicting Peter walking upon the sea, and bearing upon the brass tablet beneath the inscription—

"To the glory of God and in memory of Peter and Emma Waddington, this window has been erected by their sons Joseph, Edward, and Henry. Peter Waddington deceased Jan. 9th, A.D. 1883, aged 63 years.

Emma Waddington deceased Dec. 22nd, A.D. 1887. Aged 70 years."

Upon the same side and above the choir stalls, where those commemorated were wont to sit, is a two-light stained window with a representation of King David, and an inscription—"Venite exultemus domino." Upon the brass tablet are the words—

"To the Glory of God and in memory of John Kilham, and his son Frederick Kilham, sometime songmen in this Church (the former for 30 years and the latter for 37 years) this window is erected by the

members of the choir and others, A.D. 1891. John Kilham, deceased, 13th February, A.D. 1888. Frederick Kilham, deceased, 8th September, A.D. 1890."

On the south wall of the chancel over the small door is a marble tablet to commemorate the lives of various members of the Dickinson family.

"Sacred to the memory of Mary Martha, the beloved wife of Charles Dickinson, who died January 25th, 1859, aged 32 years.

'The memory of the just is blessed.'

Also the above Charles Dickinson, who died August 24th, 1869, aged 44 years. Also Betsy, his second wife, who died February 26th, 1864, aged 23 years. Also Frederick, their son, who died Nov. 21st, 1855, aged 10 months. Also Emily Francis, their daughter, who died March 9th, 1860, aged 3 years."

The next is a three-light window

"In memory of the late Charles Dickinson, who died August 24th A.D. 1869, aged 44";

another being

"To the Glory of God and in memory of Charles Tardy, who died January 14th A.D. 1873. Aged 32 years."

In addition to these there will soon be erected by subscription two memorials, one to the memory of Henry

Waddington, for many years Church Warden; the other to Robert Glassby, Sculptor, each of whom died during August, 1892. But the vast majority of those who worshipped in this Church are commemorated upon the tombs without the sacred edifice; to these therefore we will now direct our attention.

As we step out of the Church into the quiet God's acre we are impressed with the perfect seclusion that spreads around like a sweet fragrance of the olden time; and, as we wander around the green graves, we linger now and again to read the inscriptions on the moss-grown stones that loving hands have set up to keep alive the memories of those who sleep beneath. Here may we read the names of some of the old Mexbro' families, not many of high descent, but all honourable country folk, who have handed down to their posterity that which is to be valued far above riches,—an honoured name.

Moving among the tombs we see those to the memory of members of the families of Kilham, Lockwood, Varah, Harrop, Turner, Tyas, Axe, Tyson, Squires, Poulson, Frost, Sheepshanks, Bulay, Sutton, Roebuck, Lewis, Dickinson, Lovatt, Stead, Duke, Hewitt, Woffinden, Trickett, Harrison, Foster, Northcliffe, Dyson, Mountain, Bisby, Willey, Birks, Bingley, Pearson, Shaw, Norecliff, Lingfield, Morehouse, Hoyes, Ford, Hopewell, Awty, Forrester, Shephard, Truelove,

Beevers, Barker, Reed, Law, Middleton, Rigley, Jackson, Gill, and Glassby.

On the east side of the churchyard is a monument to the memory of the owner of the Rock Pottery—"John Reed, deceased. January 22nd, A.D. 1870. Aged 48 years." Another to Samuel Barker, of the Don Pottery—"Sacred to the memory of Samuel Barker, of Mexbro' House, who died July 15th, 1856, aged 53 years."

Reared against the wall near the little door which gives access into the chancel of the Church is a portion of an ancient stone cross, the arms having been broken away. Upon the front is a slight indication of the carving of a cross, the design of which leads us to the supposition that the monument was erected to one who fought in the Holy Land, being similar to those on the tombs of the Crusaders. Close by are two altar-tombs to the memory of members of the Glassby family, on one—"Also of Robert Glassby, who died Feb. 7, 1849. And he was Parish Clerk 49 and ½ years." A little further from the Church is a stone to the memory of his successor in office, William Lovatt; while near at hand is the spot where Mrs. Kilham found a resting place after over a hundred and three years pilgrimage.

We might go on to enumerate the virtues of those of former generations from the inscriptions here at our disposal,

but the interesting incidents from the lives of these must be reserved for a later record, when a more thorough account of Mexboro', its people, and associations, will be prepared.

While this ground served as a resting place for the departed it was also made of service to the living. In the centre of the churchyard, on the south side of the Church was formerly a well—the chief water supply for that part of the district which we now designate Old Mexboro'. Upon either side three steps led down to the water, the waste being carried by pipes to the canal. The well was filled up in 1860 for sanitary reasons by order of the Vicar, the Rev. H. Ellershaw, who is certainly to be commended for his action at that time, which did not fail to bring down upon him the benedictions (?), loud and deep, of many in the neighbourhood. There are those, however, who tell us that the water was the richer and more palateable for its close connection with the remains of the good old Yorkshire folks around.

Previous to the cutting of the canal in 1834 the burial ground extended to within a few yards of the Don, but the necessity for a navigable water-way naturally caused an encroachment upon the land consecrated to the memory of of the dead.

Looking to-day upon the burial ground while all around is so calm and peaceful, it seems difficult to connect it with the same place of seventy years ago. Then the gamins of the little town found it an agreeable spot on which to play football on the Sabbath morning. This, however, need not surprise us when we think of the "sporting Parson" who was far too fond of the glass which often robbed him of what little common sense he may have possessed. This "Shepherd of the flock" often had to be supported when officiating at the service of baptism; and on one occasion at the funeral of a parishioner he made his final appearance at such a ceremony in Mexbro.'

The little procession of mourners with the coffin and bearers had left the home of the deceased, and headed by the Parish Clerk singing aloud a suitable hymn, had entered the churchyard to be met by Parson Cann, unsteady of gait and looking far from fit to perform the last sad office for the dead. In a state of intoxication he soon found some cause of complaint and forthwith used such abominable language that the rougher section of the inhabitants decided to take the law into their own hands, and rid the town of the presence of one who brought no credit upon either the Church or the people.

On the following Sabbath a donkey was conveyed into the Church during the morning service and run forward

into the pulpit. Upon being pushed into this it leapt over into a pew, creating an awful din, to the consternation of both Parson and worshippers. The service was brought to an abrupt conclusion, the Parson, deeming discretion the better part of valour, seeking safety in retirement.

But there was to be no harbour of refuge for him in Mexbro'. Soon after retiring to his room in the farmhouse of Mr. Varah, the dense atmosphere proved beyond a doubt that the clamouring crowd without had successfully plotted to smoke him out. Upon appearing among the people he was met by groans and jeers, and escorted out of the village accompained by the clanging of tin cans; his exit being assisted by an incessant volley of tins, vegetables, and refuse.

To celebrate the outgoing of their esteemed (?) Pastor, his effigy was constructed, placed in the roadway between the Church-gates and his home opposite, and there burned amid what seemed to be a general rejoicing.

So peaceful and quiet are our surroundings that it is a matter of regret to leave this place, where we might sit and dreamily enter into the years of long ago; but we must hasten away.

Leaving by the little gate we pass a small stone house with garden, on the right. Here in bygone times dwelt the quaint Parish Clerks, until, having fulfilled their day, they

should be removed to their final resting place within the hallowed ground.

Emerging from the passage we proceed onward up the street towards an old country inn—"The Ferry Boat." Turning to the right and leaving in rear the Inn, we pass the old horse-blocks, and crossing the swing bridge spanning the canal we hail the gallant Captain of the ferry-boat, entrusting ourselves to whose care, we are speedily carried across the Don and landed in Denaby.

Here will we pause and look back upon the site of the old Rectory, formerly the home of the Saviles. The site is now covered by the swing bridge over the canal, a portion of the Vicar's garden and other land; the house having been taken down to give place to the canal.

In this old Hall a branch of the Savile family flourished for three or four generations, the first who settled here being Samuel Savile, of Wakefield, a descendant of that branch of the family known as Savile of Hullenedge. He was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and is described as "a good philosopher, mathematician, and poet." He went as Secretary to James, Earl of Carlisle, in his embassy to France, in the reign of James I. After long service and attendance at Court, he married, and retiring into the country settled at Mexbrough.

He suffered much while supporting the cause of his King during the Civil Wars, being imprisoned at Hull, and died in the year of restoration, aged 71, and was buried in the old Church, his life-work being commemorated on the tablet already mentioned.

Rushworth speaks of one Lieut. Colonel Rample, condemned to death for killing a trooper at his quarters in Mr. Savile's house in Mexbro' in 1647.

Owing to the courtesy of the Vicar we had the pleasure of inspecting some of the old oak panelling and moulding, most beautifully grained, which once formed the walls of a room in the Hall.

DENABY.

INTENT upon a short stay in Denaby we now continue our journey. The scenery around is charming, but not much remains to convey to us its past history.

In Domesday the mention is as follows:—

> "III. Manors. In Niwehalla (Newhall) Hotun (Hooton Roberts) and Degenebi (Denaby) Ulfac, Ulchel, Ulchil, had six carucates of land to be taxed where there may be four ploughs. Roger now has there one plough, and six villanes and six bordars with three ploughs, and the site of a mill. Wood pasture nine quarentens long and two broad. Soke of half a carucate of land to be taxed in Maltebi (Maltby) belongs to this Manor."

The three Saxons mentioned had given way to Roger de Busli, and from a reference to the Domesday Book we may glean the amount of his possessions.

Towards the end of the 13th Century the lands came into the hands of one Matthai Glai, Gley Brito, or le Brett. He

had three sons, Adam and Robert who died without issue, and John. The latter likewise had three sons, James, Matthew and Roger, who also dying without issue, the lands passed in due course to their sister Matilda, who married Robert le Vavasor.

In the chartularies of Worksop is a charter of the above-mentioned John, son of Matthew Brito, shewing that he gave the Canons there six marks annually to be taken from his mill at Degenebi, and in the event of the mill failing, from his Manor of Degenebi.

It appears that the whole mill was given by Roger, son of John le Breton, with the suit of his tenants, free and native of the Manor of Degenebi.

In the same chartulary is an inspeximus by John le Vavasor of Deneby of this charter of Roger le Briton his uncle, whose heir he was. The date of this is 22. Edward I. (1296).

In Kirkby's Inquest John Vavasor is returned Lord of Newhall, holding it and six bovates and a half in Mechesburg, of the King as of the honour of Tickhill, and paying for them and Degenebi 10s. ward fee, 12d. Sheriff's aid, 20d. wapentake fine, and 8d. wait meat.

William Vavasor is returned Lord in 9. Edward II. (1323), when he held Stytcleya (Steetly in Derbyshire) of the honour of Tickhill, also Degenebi, with a passage over the Don.

Both the lands of Steetly and Denaby were inherited by the Vavasors from Matthew le Brett through his granddaughter Matilda.

Denaby remained in possession of the Vavasors from the time of its acquirement by Robert till the death of William Vavasor in 4. Henry VIII. (1513). Passing then to Roger Vavasor, he sold it to his brother-in-law, Lionel Reresby of Thrybergh.

In the inquisition p. m. of Lionel the purchase is mentioned, and the Manor described as "the Manor of Denaby extending in Denaby and Mexborough; held of the Queen (Elizabeth) as of the honour of Tickhill by one knight's fee, by homage and fealty, and an annual rent of 15s. and a pound of cummin, with suit of court, and valued at £8 · 0 · 6½ per annum."

At the death of Lionel Reresby it passed to his widow Anne who was owner in 1577.

In 1804 Denaby was the sole property of Mrs. Finch, relict of Savile Finch, Esq., of Thribergh, formerly M.P. for Malton.

With Thribergh, Denaby has since descended to the Fullertons, the present Lord of the Manor being J. Fullerton, Esquire.

Of the old Denaby Hall but little has survived the hand of decay, and the improver. Originally it was built on three

sides of a square court, one portion having been used as a Chapel, and having on the east wing a tower. There still remains sufficient to interest one, and a visit would well repay a stranger to these parts.

The portion of the hall now remaining is divided into two parts, being let out to cottagers at a low rental. On one portion we notice the beams and old plaster work of the original wall; and the lower portion of the tower still remains, a monument of former greatness.

So much alteration has taken place within the building that little can be gathered as to its original construction. The rooms are spacious, but with low ceilings crossed by massive beams from wall to wall; cupboards have been added, doorways filled up, and entrances effected in more convenient places.

How altered from the days of its grandeur! Then were its principal rooms pannelled with oak, and covered with tapestry. In one compartment was an old oak chimney-piece richly carved with the arms of Reresby and Swift. [Anne Swift was the wife of Lionel Reresby, at whose acquisition of the Manor the Hall is supposed to have been built.] Around the principal shield was the quaint rhyme,

"Blessed are they
The Scripture doth say,
That heares the worde of God and keepes it alwaye."

and on another portion was the old motto of the Reresbys—"Mercy Jesu"; and that of the Swifts—"De bon servira."

Many are the charming spots and picturesque homes in this lovely district, but there is no other place or building of such importance as to warrant us in further prolonging our stay on this side of the Don.

Tempus fugit, and having fanned such recollections of the olden time as now remain, our labour of love and research must close. And leaving to the tender mercies of our readers this brief record of the "Memorials of Old Mexboro'," we will bid them—

FAREWELL.

John Fillingham, Printer, 43 West Street, Sheffield.

By the same Author.

MEMOIR

OF THE LIFE OF

ROBERT GLASSBY,

SCULPTOR.

WILL BE READY SHORTLY.

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